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TO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 6092  
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UNCLAS STATE 347078

E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: SHUM, EAID, HA  
SUBJECT: PRESS RELEASE OF CONGRESSMAN FAUNTROY ABOUT  
RECENT ARRESTS IN HAITI

REFS: PORT AU PRINCE 6438

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A PRESS RELEASE MAILED BY  
CONGRESSMAN FAUNTROY TO HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE ON THE MAILING  
LIST OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS TASK FORCE ON  
HAITIAN REFUGEES. FAUNTROY STILL PLANS TO VISIT HAITI  
FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 10 ALONG WITH CONGRESSMAN  
DYNALLY AND POSSIBLY OTHERS.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

FAUNTROY EXPRESSES GROWING CONCERN WITH RECENT ARRESTS IN  
HAITI, SEEKS CLARIFICATION. CONGRESSMAN WALTER E.  
FAUNTROY (D-DC) IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE  
CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS TASK FORCE ON HAITIAN  
REFUGEES, TODAY, EXPRESSED GROWING CONCERN WITH A SERIES  
OF RECENT ARRESTS IN HAITI.

CONGRESSMAN FAUNTROY SAID, "THAT BASED UPON REPORTS, AT  
LEAST SOME OF THESE ARRESTS, APPEAR TO HAVE INCLUDED  
PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND WORKING  
EXCLUSIVELY FOR GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT WITH AND ON BEHALF  
OF THE POOR IN HAITI."

THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS TASK FORCE ON HAITIAN  
REFUGEES HAS BEEN SEEKING A CLARIFICATION OF THESE  
ARRESTS FROM THE EMBASSY OF HAITI SINCE IT FIRST LEARNED  
OF THEM, BUT NONE HAS YET BEEN PROVIDED.

"ARRESTS OF PEOPLE WORKING SOLELY ON DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS  
SUCH AS HAS BEEN REPORTED, COULD BE INTERPRETED AS AN  
ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE PEOPLE ENGAGED IN DEMOCRATIC  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ESSENTIAL IF DEVELOPMENT  
ASSISTANCE IS TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF BENEFITTING THE  
SUFFERING POOR OF HAITI," SAID FAUNTROY.

THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS TASK FORCE ON HAITIAN  
REFUGEES WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION IN HAITI  
AND WILL SEEK TO OBTAIN AN EXPLANATION OF THE ARRESTS  
FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF HAITI.

CONGRESSMAN FAUNTROY REITERATED HIS CONCERN AND EXPRESSED  
THE VIEW THAT "THESE ARRESTS, UNLESS CLARIFIED, COULD

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HAVE THE EFFECT OF INHIBITING THE POTENTIAL OF U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND WOULD BE A GRAVE SETBACK TO THOSE HAITIANS AND FRIENDS OF HAITI, WHO DESPERATELY WANT TO SEE THE HAITIAN PEOPLE BENEFIT FROM DEVELOPMENT AND NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE."

IN CONCLUSION, CONGRESSMAN FAUNTROY SAID, "I AM DISTURBED THAT THESE ARRESTS COULD BE CONSTRUED AS PART OF A PATTERN AND PRACTICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE AND THE DISREGARD OF THE RULE OF LAW WHICH ESCALATED DURING THE SUMMER OF 1984 WITH SUPPRESSION OF FREEDOMS OF THE PRESS AND ASSOCIATION." END TEXT.

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